

STATEMENT OF RAYMOND A. SALAZAR, DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CONCERNING AVIATION SECURITY. FEBRUARY 9, 1989.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to appear before the Subcommittee today to highlight for you our experience under the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, and to describe briefly for you the FAA's efforts to combat the threat of terrorist activity against civil aviation.

The recent tragedy of Pan Am Flight 103 is a graphic and troubling reminder that, despite worldwide efforts to improve aviation security, civil aviation remains vulnerable to criminal and terrorist acts. It further highlights the pressing need to ensure we are doing all that is technologically and humanly possible to reduce the threat to the traveling public, building on the strong foundation we have in place.

Aviation security is a dynamic process. We constantly must seek to identify the threat against civil aviation and then apply the appropriate tools and techniques necessary to offset the tools and techniques used by those who would thwart the system. It is an ever changing process because, as technology and political objectives change, so does the threat. In the early 1970's, we

revolutionized the civil aviation security system by instituting a sky marshal program and by implementing a highly effective passenger screening system designed to stem the wave of hijackings being experienced at that time. But as the level and nature of the threat to the traveling public has varied, so has our response. We have continued to make changes to that system, through heightened expectations of what the system must be able to detect and through improvements to equipment, techniques, and personnel; our recent requirement calling for improved systems for restricting and monitoring access to secured areas on airports is one example of such a change. And the system has worked remarkably well for over a decade and a half.

In 1985, following the TWA hijacking, Congress, with the strong leadership of this Committee, called on the FAA to initiate a major program to make assessments of the security of foreign airports serving the United States. This new legislative thrust, contained in the International Security and Development Cooperation Act, significantly expanded the FAA's "global" presence in security matters and represented a measured response to a growing international threat against American aviation interests. Additional steps were taken as well at that time to increase funding for FAA security research and development work and to bolster security inspector and Federal Air Marshal staffing within the FAA. Further, the United States worked within the

International Civil Aviation Organization to strengthen international security requirements, and the FAA took actions to enhance security requirements for U.S. carriers operating abroad.

More recently, following the Pan Am tragedy over Scotland, FAA instituted a series of new security measures to tighten U.S. air carrier security requirements at airports in Western Europe and the Middle East:

- o Airlines must now complete 100% x-ray or physical inspection of all checked baggage.
- o Passengers may not have access to the contents of checked baggage following the security inspection.
- o Airlines must perform a positive match of passenger and baggage to ensure unaccompanied bags are not loaded onto the aircraft.
- o Airlines must take additional measures to preclude unauthorized access to baggage from check-in to loading on board the aircraft.
- o An increased number of passengers is to be randomly selected for enhanced screening. Checked baggage of the persons

identified for enhanced screening must be physically inspected.

- o Small packages and parcels that are shipped through passenger ticket counters must be x-rayed or physically examined prior to shipment.

These measures exact a cost on our air transportation system and are not lightly taken by the FAA. But we will not hesitate to tilt the balance toward improved security and away from convenience when that is necessary to protect our citizens. Thus far, these measures appear to be working without undue hardship or inconvenience to air travelers.

We are also continuing our aggressive program of foreign airport assessments called for in the International Security and Development Cooperation Act. Since the inception of this program in 1986, we have conducted nearly 800 visits to 216 foreign airports in 107 countries. We have been well pleased at the cooperative approach shown generally by host governments, and believe this program has aided in attaining additional security improvements at many foreign airports. At this time, we have not identified any need for legislative change to the framework established by the Act. The current Act enables us to conduct assessments, provides general guidance concerning the nature of

assessments to be conducted, and prescribes a workable and appropriate approach toward public notification of uncorrected problems at foreign airports, all in a manner which highlights the need for a cooperative rather than unilateral approach toward solving security problems. Furthermore, we have not identified a need for other new legislation dealing with aviation security matters. FAA has substantial existing authority to tailor its requirements to meet new or changed threats, and we would not favor legislation directing specific kinds of security procedures to be followed or which would otherwise reduce our flexibility to deal with a dynamic issue. Following Secretary Skinner's efforts at ICAO, should we determine that additional authority is necessary, we will, of course, seek your assistance in providing such authority.

With regard to our security staffing posture, this fiscal year we are increasing our civil aviation security workforce by an additional 50 personnel, and have requested 120 additional security personnel in our FY 1990 budget. These additional employees will facilitate our efforts to respond to the international threat and to continue to improve security here in the United States. The added staffing will enable us to improve the FAA presence in the most pressing areas of the world.

We are accelerating the delivery schedule of the thermal neutron

analysis (TNA) units we have ordered for bomb detection. This remarkable system is the result of three years of FAA-directed research on an explosive detection system developed to detect all commercial and military explosives which might be concealed in checked baggage and air cargo.

Prototype TNA systems have already been tested at the Los Angeles and San Francisco Airports during June 1987-March 1988. One of the systems was electronic-based; the other was Californium-based, using a radioactive element referred to as "CF." Six CF-based TNA units will be delivered and in operation during the June 1989 to January 1990 time frame, six months ahead of schedule. We believe this unit shows great promise for operating effectively in screening passenger luggage. Our experience examining over 30,000 bags using thermal neutron analysis demonstrated that it could screen baggage with a high success rate (95%) and a low false alarm rate (4%). I should add that the high success rate was attained finding minimal quantities of explosives, and would be higher with larger amounts of explosive material. I would further note that the radioactive elements of the TNA system are well within prescribed safety levels and pose no threat to system operators or passengers.

Research is also underway on an explosive vapor detection system for checking people for explosives. Last October at Boston Logan

Airport, we tested a prototype walk-up explosive detection booth designed to detect the entire spectrum of explosives which may be carried by a saboteur. The false alarm rate was exceptionally low--less than 1%--but the time to test each passenger was about 30 seconds. The manufacturer is working now on reducing that time frame to about 6 seconds per passenger. We hope to have the improved device available for testing late this year.

We also are continuing work to develop improved weapons detection capabilities, including efforts for the detection of plastic weapons, and are conducting an evaluation of state-of-the-art detection equipment which is commercially available. Further, we continue to solicit new ideas from the scientific and academic community with a view toward identifying and developing additional tools that will enhance security.

All of these efforts are important to improving civil aviation security, and they will continue. Additionally, though, we must continue to work in the international arena to develop an international approach to end terrorism in the skies. Secretary Skinner is doing just that. On January 24, the United Kingdom and the United States jointly called for a special Session of the Council of ICAO to improve international security procedures, and urged that representatives be at the Ministerial level. Secretary Skinner will attend the Council meeting scheduled for February 15-16 as the United States representative.

One of the United States' primary objectives for this Ministerial-level meeting is to reach agreement on strengthened ICAO international security standards, and to consider how they can be expanded and applied uniformly to operations assessed as subject to high risk. The United States is committed to exercising continued leadership within the world community to stop terrorism.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank this Committee for its longstanding support of the FAA concerning the international aspects of FAA's aviation security efforts. We look forward to continuing working with you on these key issues which are so important to the traveling public.

That completes my prepared statement, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to respond to questions you may have at this time.